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Ministry of Advanced Education

$6.5M FOR UBC ADVANCED SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY FACILITY

VICTORIA – The Province is providing $6.5 million towards a UBC Quantum Materials Spectroscopy Centre (QMSC) for researchers to develop advances in a variety of fields, including electronics, telecommunications, computer science and biomedicine, announced Advanced Education Minister Murray Coell.

"This funding will propel UBC to the forefront of scientific studies in this area, attracting researchers from all over the world to the new facility," said Coell. "We are committed to investing in research that contributes to our knowledge-based economy, and this facility will do does just that."

The QMSC will use synchrotron light technology, which can examine matter down to the level of the atom. This technology can work as an industrial tool, with the ability to machine tiny gears smaller than the width of a human hair, to etch microscopic patterns for a wide range of information technology applications or to weld advanced ceramics that cannot be joined any other way. Researchers at the facility can use synchrotron technology to design everything from more powerful microchips to new materials like strong metal alloys for airplane wings. The QMSC can also be used to design quantum computer technology that can perform information processing much more efficiently than traditional computers.

"The QMSC will be the only one of its kind in the world, reinforcing UBC's reputation as a leader in scientific innovation," said UBC president Stephen J. Toope. "This investment will allow our researchers and students to contribute to both fundamental science and real-world applications."

The facility will be located at the Canadian Light Source (CLS), the national synchrotron centre based in Saskatoon. The CLS is one of Canada's largest scientific projects with researchers studying some of the world's most complex problems, including diseases, natural pesticides, fuel efficiency, air pollution, the health of food, and forensic science.

Close to 1,000 professors, students, scientists and industrial engineers participate in studies every year at the CLS and the QMSC is expected to attract an additional 300 people.

"We will use the QMSC as an extension of our physics classroom," said UBC research chair Andrea Damascelli, who will lead the project. "We are excited about our ability to increase our research efforts in this important area of study."

The Province's investment comes from the B.C. Knowledge Development Fund, which provides capital funding for research equipment and facilities for public post-secondary institutions, teaching hospitals and affiliated non-profit agencies. The project has also been awarded funding from the Canada Foundation for Innovation.

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Since 2001, the Province has invested $1.5 billion for research in B.C. and leveraged another $900 million in added funding from other sources.

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